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# Programs & Services



**Illinois Department of Children and Family Services**  
Serving all citizens regardless of their race, creed, or ethnic background

The Department of Children and Family Services administers a variety of programs designed to strengthen family life in Illinois by helping people, young and old, who have physical, emotional, or social handicaps. Staff in offices throughout the state provide a wide range of child welfare services. The Department also operates four institutions for care of dependent and neglected children, three residential schools for youngsters who have physical handicaps, a rehabilitation institute for the blind, a program of in-home counseling and instruction for the visually handicapped, and a home for veterans and their spouses.



## CHILD WELFARE

The Department offers family counseling (including family planning information); protection of abused and neglected children; placement of children in foster homes, group homes, and institutions; support, supervision, and training for older adolescents living outside the family home; services to unmarried



parents; adoption; homemaker service; and day care. If able, parents pay for care provided their children by the Department.

Under terms of the Illinois Child Care Act, the Department establishes standards for and licenses foster homes, voluntary child welfare agencies and institutions, and day and night care facilities for children.

The Department operates Herrick House Children's Center (a temporary care center for dependent and neglected boys and girls in Bartlett), a temporary child care facility in Maryville, a group care home for adolescent boys in Hurst, and Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Children's School in Normal, a home for dependent and neglected boys and girls.

## ABUSED CHILD ACT

Administration of the Abused Child Act is a major Department responsibility. The Act requires hospital officials, doctors, nurses, teachers, day care operators, social workers, and law enforcement officers to report to the Department suspected cases of child abuse, neglect, or malnutrition which may come to their attention. The Department is required to investigate each report within 24 hours and provide appropriate services to the child and his or her family. In addition, the Department maintains a central registry of suspected child abuse cases and publishes regular statistical summaries of its records.

## DAY CARE

By law, the Department is responsible for statewide planning, coordination, and licensing of day care programs serving children. The Department is also involved in provision of day care services. Through grants and contracts with local agencies, it stimulates the development and expansion of day care programs. It also purchases day care service for

children who are agency wards or whose families are receiving Department casework services.

Department day care services also include counsel and technical assistance to community groups which desire to establish day care facilities.



## ADULT REHABILITATION

Services for adult rehabilitation include operation of the Illinois Veterans Home in Quincy and the Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute in Chicago. In addition, services are provided to visually handicapped persons in their homes by rehabilitation teachers from the Community Services for the Visually Handicapped program. These teachers are based at selected Department offices.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

Three residential schools operated by the Department provide a variety of services for children who cannot be educated and cared for in their home communities or elsewhere by public or voluntary agencies. The schools are Illinois Children's Hospital-School (for



crippled children) in Chicago; Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School in Jacksonville; and Illinois School for the Deaf in Jacksonville.

## **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

Many Department institutions and offices provide citizens and local organizations with opportunities to participate in volunteer programs aimed at enriching the lives of persons whom the Department serves.

## **COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

Recent additions to the Department volunteer program are the Community Councils. These are volunteer advocacy groups that, through a combination of their own initiative and Department resources, work to improve social services in their individual towns and cities.

# **ILLINOIS STATE LIBRARY**



## OMBUDSPERSONS

DCFS has two ombudspersons whose duties include helping citizens served by the Department obtain information and aid in unusual problem situations. They are stationed in Springfield, (217) 782-7615, and Chicago, (312) 793-4650.

## SERVICE APPEAL SYSTEM

When persons served by the Department have an honest difference of opinion with a DCFS decision or action concerning them, they are encouraged to voice their concern through the Service Appeal System. Information on the system is available from Department offices and the ombudspersons.

## INFORMATION SERVICES

For more information on services provided by the Department, write or phone:

Office of Community Relations  
Illinois Department of Children and  
Family Services  
524 South Second Street  
Springfield, Illinois 62706  
(217) 782-3124

